

TIMELINE

The German revolution is the first powerful prelude to the incipient liquidation of the war, and this prelude shows the dimensions and effects of the individual phases of this liquidation. For us Jews, this final, final phase of the war will be of incalculable importance, and in its future-determining effect of greater, more decisive importance than the war years themselves were.

But apart from that, for internal reasons, our relationship to the events of this liquidation period will be more intense, and above all more positive, than it was during the war itself. Internally we were not involved in the war; as a collective group we had nothing to do with it, as Jewish individuals we rejected it like any violence. The time that begins will be closer to us inside. It will be revolutionary and uplifting, cleansing and creative.

We will feel akin to it in the ideas that guide it and the goals to which it strives; it will set the spirit against violence, the law against power, peace against the people's war, and we will know: this is where Jewish ethos and Jewish pathos work. Again there comes a time of the breakthrough of the Jewish spirit in the world, a time when humanity takes a step forward towards its self-redemption. How could we stand apart, even when it comes to reorganizing the existence of the other peoples? We will live through this time, positively and affirmatively, in full awareness that we are grandchildren of the prophets. -

This principle already contains the most important things about our internal position on the German revolution. How do you greet; from the innermost core of our being and from the immanent spirit of our history. Not because it is also of value to us, brings us improvement in our situation, but because it is a victory for the spirit that wants freedom and justice.

This victory is not yet complete; The intellectual, positive, creative character of the German revolution is not yet assured; because, seen from its immediate causes, it was less the work of positive spiritual tendencies than negative forces of discontent and disappointment, hunger and defeat. Still: holy powers and goal setting have worked in it; Spiritual forces will play an even stronger role in fulfilling their central positive task, in building the new German state.

Insofar as it is a new attempt by the people to shape their existence and their future, their organization and way of life, better, more just, more humane, to break out of survived ties and fetters and to shape their life anew according to ethical principles, we become - whole apart from the relationships of the individual to Germany and Germanness - as Jews, as people of Jewish nature and of a Jewish nature, are intrinsically interested in this work, and as far as the Jewish imperatives of our life

allow, to participate in it honestly and consciously, in an awe-inspiring and formative manner.

For German Jewry, the German revolution will be of multiple and profound significance. I am not thinking primarily of the next and most immediate thing: the change in his civil status in Germany.

The retreat of the German Jews in the political life of the country has come to an end, and if not always (and if the situation consolidates soon no longer) the number of Jewish ministers will remain as large as they are at the moment, so but full, gapless equality will remain a guaranteed result of the revolution. Even if it represents an outward improvement in the situation of German Jews, this is important.

The other result that the German revolution showed in its external effects on Judaism is also of importance: the overthrow of the anti-Semitic superpower of our time (after the Russian revolution and the collapse of Austria's only). That was undoubtedly the old Germany, naturally it was as a bulwark of the traditional powers and tendencies of Europe. Its collapse means a cleansing of the global political atmosphere from the anti-Semitic fumes that it filled before the war - not to mention the war.

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Such atmospheric changes in world politics are of greater importance than many who tend to perceive only the obvious external questions in political life might believe. The existence of the three anti-Semitic great powers, Tsarist Russia, monarchical Germany and clerical Austria, was perhaps not so strongly felt from the war in Jewish-political terms, because there was still no generous, systematic, really Jewish policy. Their continued existence would have become much more palpable for the future after the era of the independent national politics of our people began in this war.

The collapse of these three powers in their old form means a significant relief for the conduct of Jewish politics, and the fact that the same war that brought about the inauguration of a globally recognized Jewish national policy also brought about the overthrow of the three anti-Jewish great powers a strange encounter that may give cause for thought.

The overcoming of the anti-Semitic character of Germany will be of very immediate importance, especially in view of the fact that Germany will only now be able to really approach the Jewish question politically, and will thus begin to become an opponent of our policy for us. We also conducted political negotiations with old Germany, and the previous German government also tried to take a position on Jewish-political questions; but in the end it always remained with half measures (one thinks of the well-known explanation of the bush) and without great success. It is clear that the anti-Semitic attitudes of the current rulers in Germany played a major role here. Only

the new Germany, free from these attitudes and inhibitions, will be able to have an inner understanding of the problems and demands of the Jewish people and to look at the Jewish question under great political aspects. This may be unimportant at the moment, as Germany has little to say about the development of the most important Jewish question, but it will be of considerable importance in the long run. Nothing would be more wrong than if Jews now, in view of Germany's powerlessness, wanted to remove this from the political calculations of the Jewish people. The German population of seventy million remains a central factor in world politics; its proximity to the East will always give it considerable importance for many Jewish questions; we will always have to make politics with Germany, and now that the new Germany is emerging, we will do it gladly and happily.

But these subsequent, most obvious and most immediate effects of the German revolution for us Jews are not to be discussed here in the first place. Even more important are the internal consequences that it will have for Jewish life, consequences that are not so superficially perceptible as those mentioned above, which will only become in their full strength in the course of the next time with the internal deepening and clarification of the revolutionaries. The transformation of German existence will be able to manifest itself.

This effect primarily affects the internal situation of German Jewry. It cannot be doubted that the attitude and demeanor, the mentality and the way of feeling of the German Jewry in Jewish as well as in human matters were strongly influenced by their roots in the life of Germany. Above all, the state atmosphere had a particularly strong impact on German Jews because, as a result of their reluctance and danger in their civil rights, they became very insecure and sensitive, extremely fearful and suspicious. The profound effect of this is shown by nothing more clearly than the attitude of the majority of German Jews to the national Jewish idea; Their negative opinion was undoubtedly primarily due to the uncertainty in their civic position. Almost all of their reservations and inhibitions about their commitment to the national idea were paraphrases and disguises of this one moment of their attitude towards the German state; out of "patriotism" the German Jews refused to join the national movement.

Here the German revolution has brought about a profound change in the situation. Even the elimination of disenfranchisement will, over time, make German Jews safer and calmer, more stable and self-confident in matters of the state. The really equal Jew, for whom full equality is a matter of course, will no longer allow all his actions and appearances to be determined by the consideration of the opinion of the state and the "others". The fearfulness and anxiety, the unworthy squinting at the "others" will come to an end and with that the strongest obstacle to any true education of the German Jew to a self-confident, politically active Judaism will be removed.

Another is added. The entire state-political atmosphere in Germany has undergone a decisive change as a result of the revolution. The state-political thinking and feeling, the political mentality of old Germany was dominated and determined by the specifically Prussian concept of the state, as it found the strongest and most grandiose

expression in Hegel's state philosophy: the concept of the omnipotent state, the idol state. The state of old Germany had the inner power and dignity of a god; it had the metaphysical consecration that gave it a truly divine omnipotence in the eyes of its citizens. He was allowed to dispose of his citizens without resignation, he claimed not only what they did, but what they should be and what they should be, their entire being and person; he claimed every one of his citizens utterly for himself and did not allow him to have any other strong ties that went beyond the borders of the state. The social democrat, the pacifist, the internationalist were considered a bad patriot by the old state because they emphasized their affiliation to other extra-state and supranational communities. It was entirely in keeping with this conception of the state and this state mentality to which the German Jew had assimilated (however non-Jewish and contrary to the Jewish ethos this concept of the state may be) if the German Jew, out of patriotic misgivings, did not dare to confess to Jewish nationalism and to the Zionists scold a bad patriot. He believed through his solidarity with the whole of Judaism, through his commitment to the international national community of Jews, that he was violating his duty to the state and was in agreement with the view of this state itself.

This state collapsed in the revolution; A new concept of the state has come to dominate, which no longer grants the state the idolatrous omnipotence, which is more liberal, more humane, free, which no longer claims human beings in their totality, which allows them to belong to supranational and extra-state communities because he himself is no longer an end in itself and an absolute being, but a means and tool in the service of the spirit, and subordinate to the idea of humanity. That the socialist and pacifist tendencies and parties are the creators of the new Germany is the most obvious manifestation of what is perhaps the most significant change in intellectual history that the revolution has brought about. Naturally, this will be of extraordinary importance for the German Jews. Once they have adjusted to this new concept of the state, they will no longer struggle against joining national Jewry out of patriotic concerns. The strongest obstacle to their commitment to the Jewish nationality will fall, and the way will be free for the nationalization and Jewish-political activation of the German Jews. The beneficial consequences of this for the Jewish community as a whole, what the connection of German Jewry with its extraordinary political powers, its spiritual energies and its cultural qualities to the national movement means, need not be shown. The German revolution will sooner or later also result in a revolution of the German Jews. A start has already been made with the Jewish congress movement, which will be discussed in detail in the next chronicle. The most important task for us Jews in Germany resulting from the German Revolution is to tackle and carry out the Jewish Revolution in Germany, which has long been necessary and has now become possible.

Amitai